



Remote Participation Study Committee

Date: **June 28, 2022**

Time: **6:00 – 7:40 pm**

Location: Hybrid, Town Managers Conference Room and Zoom.

Minutes

Attendance: Mustafa Varoglu, Chair, Jennifer Susse, Co-Chair, Stacie Nicole Smith, Secretary, Jim Feeney, Eric Helmuth, Alex Bagnall, Janice Cagan-Teuber.

AGENDA

1. Review and accept meeting minutes from April 19, and May 24 meetings – 10 minutes
2. Public Comment – 15 minutes
3. Future meeting dates – 10 minutes
4. Hybrid demo current and next steps, including document review and ZBA correspondence – 40+ minute
5. Future business – 10 minutes

Decisions Reached and Action Items:

- Resend April 19, May 24, and tonight's minutes (June 28) for approval at next meeting
- Eric will make the introduction to invite Jeff from ACMI to join the beginning of the July 12th meeting.
- Circle back on Zoom licensing issues once we know more
- Reach out to Doug Heim to understand if a meeting halted for technical failures can be postponed to another date or have items tabled, especially if an in-person quorum is not present.
- Reach out to the Town Manager's office regarding a policy or position on duration of saving meeting recordings.
- Next Committee meeting will be July 12
- Post Doodle Poll to schedule a late August meeting

Summary of Discussions:

The meeting was called to order.

Approval of the Minutes: Approval was deferred. Mustafa will send all the meeting minutes for review and approval at the next meeting

Public Comment: No members of the public were present

Future Meeting Dates: July 12 7:30. Meeting dates are set except late August and early October – will post doodle poll for late August. Will test a NEAT BAR at next meeting

Hybrid Demo Current and Next Steps:

TECHNOLOGY:

The meeting began by discussing the OWL meeting technology. Jim Feeney, Eric Helmuth, and Alex Bagnall were in the Meeting room on the OWL, the other three were remote on zoom. Participants were quite impressed with the ease and functionality of the OWL.

In conversation with ACMI about School Committee, they reported that hybrid meeting technology is not going smoothly. Takes 2 hours of preparation work before each meeting (the Select Board takes only 1 hour). Last Select Board meeting went smoothly, though it has been starting late - speaks to value of equipment in the Select Board room. Makes sense for the RPSC to better understand the technology challenges in the School Committee room – it is new technology, but not sure what the issues are.

All the new OWL and Near Bar technology for videoconferencing has arrived. Some going to Town Hall, some to Community Center. NEAT Boards – like a TV on wheels with NEAT bar built in. 2 NEAT BAR PROs, one going to 2nd floor conference at Town Hall, and second floor Health and Human Services Conference room at Community Center. Four Meeting Owl Pros are presently being used in Town Hall; these can be paired together for larger meeting rooms. We don't yet have the displays, as soon as we do, they will all be installed. All with the grant money, including installation of displays. Don't know if cabling or electrical wiring is needed. The cart version is intended to live on main floor at Community Center, and to be wheeled from room to room. There is desire to explore opportunities to use the NEAT Board to expand access to Council on Aging programming during the day.

Update on communication that came from the ZBA – they really want to do hybrid meetings. They would like to start late July. Three options: 1) use Select Board room but would need ACMI support, 2) an OWL conference room, 3) community center or Lyon's room with NEAT Board. Most want them in a NEAT BAR PRO room, which will require a presentation screen. Worth talking with ACMI – they have been broadcasting zoom meetings. If 40B applications are to be discussed at ZBA meetings ACMI might be interested, but only if a lot of public interest.

ACMi is a non-profit independently funded from cable fees and don't invoice the Town per meeting. They do their best to dedicate resources based on community requests. Plan is to follow up with ACMi supervisor, Jeff Munroe, to share where the town is going with remote access to hybrid meetings and to and get their professional perspective including feedback on our future meeting surveys. In particular, their experience and thoughts on the Select Board and School Committee Meeting rooms and their equipment. Also, would they be able to provide broadcast and hybrid meeting support if equipment is upgraded. Eric will arrange an

email introduction and we can meet at their convenience or see if they want to attend the beginning of a remote participation study committee meeting.

Next Steps on Technology: What RPSC promised was rooms with the technology, some instructions on how to use it, ideally with pictures, video, or something to prepare committees to use the technology. Example is the multi-media guide in the Town Manager's Conference room. The Owl is simple, can link to QR code video on how to use it.

Update on Zoom account: Town office has already been keeping up with requests for remote meetings including providing log-in info and we recommend that we keep that approach. A new concern is Zoom is looking for more factors of authentication – this runs afoul of us giving the same credentials to multiple board, committee and commission meeting organizers. We've asked Zoom to take off these features and accept the risk. If we have to have 50 accounts and licenses, it will be expensive. The Neat pads will only work with a zoom room license, which is cost more money. If hybrid, might need multiple zoom room licenses.

Need to generate a policy on what to do when the tech fails? To address issues such as: i) how late are you willing to start? ii) how do you manage the expectations of public or remote participations? iii) how do you communicate to remote participants - they give their emails to sign up for a meeting, but the meeting chair can't access them? iv) what about internet connectivity – can't log in to get emails. For example, obtaining the meeting registration list is possible but somewhat complicated. If people sign up at last minute or after the meeting starts the registration list obtained at the beginning of the meeting may be incomplete. This will make it a challenge to contact people in the event of a technology (including internet) failure occurs.

We must have advice, recommendations for them on what to do. Help them understand contingencies and make choices. Need to have contingency, and to communicate that to participants, perhaps on the meeting agenda, so it is publicly posted. It will partly depend on who is in person vs. remote. The RPSC will check with Doug Heim to learn if they can postpone a meeting or table agenda items due to technical failure if there is a quorum of members in the room.

Recording meetings: While recording is simple and can be done on a meeting-by-meeting basis, saving the recordings can become costly in time and money for the Town. Meeting record retention duration is an issue that may be better set by the Town Manager's Office. Will reach out to the Town Manager's office to get their opinion on this as well.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Date (all Tuesdays)	Unavailable	Subcommittee work meetings	Logistics Deliverable	Guidance Deliverables
May 24	Rachel			
June 7	Jim late	X		
June 21	Jim late		Owls Rooms	Draft Decision point document. <i>Will include draft language for expectations for remote and in-person participants based on decision points document</i>
July 13	Janice		Neat Rooms	
Aug 2				How to use room documents;
Aug 23	Jennifer, Rachel, Stacie maybe			Google Questionnaire (mid August) for i) attendees ii) chair-specific Qs What worked/ what didn't
Sept 13				
Oct 4 (Kol Nidre)	Janice, Stacie			
Oct 25	Rachel			Material for 3 to 6 month check-in
Nov 15				
Dec 6	Rachel			
Dec 20				
Jan 10				
Jan 31				
Feb 21				
March 7				
March 21				
April 4				